



# IOWA RECOVERY TIMES

Published by  
the Rebuild Iowa Office

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## March Proclaimed As Flood Awareness Month in Iowa

On March 1, several state agencies kicked off month-long Flood Awareness Month efforts to assist Iowans in preparing for and remaining safe during flood events. Flood awareness is particularly important when considering damage caused in Iowa by flooding in 2008 and 2010.

Gov. Terry Branstad officially declared March Flood Awareness Month in Iowa. "It is important for Iowans to know the steps they can take to protect themselves and their property from future flood events," said Gov. Branstad. "The Flood Awareness Month campaign will help educate Iowans about resources available to

minimize loss when flooding occurs."

State officials advise people to begin assessing their flood risk by being aware of whether they live in or near a flood plain, discussing flood preparations with their families, and considering whether flood insurance would be a good choice for them.

Additional information about the benefits of flood insurance can be found at the Iowa Insurance Division's flood awareness Web site, [www.donttestthewatersiowa.gov](http://www.donttestthewatersiowa.gov). Another helpful Web site for Iowans to refer to is [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov). Homeowners, renters and small business owners can estimate their premiums,

calculate their flood insurance rate and find a local insurance agent qualified to sell flood insurance on this site.

Lastly, Iowa offers three simple steps for Iowans to protect themselves and their families before a flood or disaster occurs:

- Learn about and stay aware of flood risks in your community.
- Put together a family emergency and evacuation plan.
- Put together an emergency kit before a disaster strikes.

Iowans can learn more about flood safety tips, evacuation plans and how to prepare for a disaster at [www.bereadyiowa.org](http://www.bereadyiowa.org).

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## Iowans Reminded of Spring Flooding Dangers

Earlier this month, Gov. Branstad, Lt. Gov. Reynolds and Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) administrator Brig. General Hill reminded Iowans of the dangers of flooding.

Recent updates from the National Weather Service indicates elevated river levels for various areas of the state.

"As Iowans know, with spring comes the risk of flooding," said Branstad. "Our administration is bringing together local, state and federal partners to ask questions and discuss planning and response actions that could be put into place to prepare for potential flooding."

"Based on current predictions, HSEMD is compiling an inventory of flood-fighting resources,

discussing local flood concerns with the Army Corps of Engineers, developing staffing patterns and reviewing policies for resource deployment," said Brig. General Hill. "HSEMD has been, and will continue to work with partners at all levels to remain aware of and monitor ongoing forecast information."

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## Two-Year Flood Preparedness Campaign Began in March

Angel Robinson wants to ensure Iowans know how to prepare for flood events and how to stay safe when they happen, reducing the possibilities of injury and property damage.

Robinson, consumer advocate with the Iowa Insurance Division (IID), is the program manager for a two-year flood awareness and readiness campaign titled "Don't Test the Waters." The campaign began with the declaration of March as Flood Awareness Month.

The "Don't Test the Waters," campaign is a multi-agency effort, involving the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency

Management Division and the Rebuild Iowa Office. The campaign consists of media interviews, radio and newspaper advertising, direct-mail flyers, informational flyers in utility bills, a new Web site and community meetings.

"Our goal is to help Iowans understand everyone can be affected by a flood," Robinson said. "Iowans need to be aware of what they can do to protect themselves and their property. A little preparation in advance will aid any home or business owner should a flood or other disaster come their way."

Robinson emphasized the campaign's intent is to ensure individuals and families have more

tools at their disposal for handling a flood event.

The campaign's new Web site [www.DontTestTheWatersIowa.gov](http://www.DontTestTheWatersIowa.gov) was launched this month to provide additional information to Iowans, along with a text message sign-up option to receive flood preparedness information.

In May and June, there will be five "Don't Test The Waters" forums hosted in Ottumwa, Burlington, Council Bluffs, Des Moines and Cedar Rapids. Five more forums will be held in additional Iowa communities in 2012.

With these efforts, Iowans will have an opportunity to be exposed to the flood awareness and preparation message over the next two years, she added.

## More Than \$4.36 Billion in 2008 Disaster Recovery Funds Allocated to Iowa

More than \$60.7 million dollars were spent on disaster recovery projects and programs during February, bringing the total dollars spent on the recovery so far to more than \$1.7 billion.

Funds promised to Iowa for the 2008 disaster recovery total more than \$4.36 billion, and the disaster funds approved for state and local use total more than \$4 billion.

For more information and to see charts detailing the movement of recovery funds, visit the Rebuild Iowa Office Web site at [www.rio.iowa.gov](http://www.rio.iowa.gov).

### SPRING FLOODING (continued)

HSEMD recommends all Iowans follow these steps to ensure safety during flood season:

#### Step One: Build an Emergency Supply Kit

Keep a kit at home and in your car. Include:

- Water and non-perishable food for 3-5 days
- A first aid kit
- A battery-operated flashlight and radio along with extra batteries
- Extra clothing
- Special items, such as prescription medications, baby formula and diapers
- Copies of important documents,

such as birth certificates and insurance information

#### Step Two: Make An Emergency Plan

- Designate a family contact in case you are separated during an emergency. Choose an out-of-town friend or relative to be a contact point since phone service can be affected during a disaster.
- Develop an evacuation plan. Contact your local emergency manager to learn about evacuation routes and shelter locations.
- Plan for your pets. Since most shelters don't accept pets, prepare a list of kennels, friends and family members who could care for your

pet in the event of a flood.

- Plan for special needs. Make sure elderly people or those who depend on life-sustaining health-related equipment such as a ventilator, have what they need if they must leave their home.

#### Step Three: Be aware of the Hazards that Can Affect Your Community

- Learn about the hazards that can affect your community.
- Pay attention to local radio and television stations for up-to-date information.
- Invest in a NOAA weather radio to receive alerts for your area 24 hours a day 7 days a week.